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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the Year

1953

Public Health Officers

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

JAMES L. GREGORY,
M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H., D.T.M, AND HY.

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

H. V. JAMES,
M.INST. MUN. ENG., CERT. ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.

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CAUSES OF DEATH.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

LUDLOW,
1st June, 1954.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the report on the health of the Borough for the year ended 31st December, 1953.

The Registrar-General's estimate of the population as at mid-1953 is given as 6,452. This shows an increase of 13 from the figure for 1952. The Birth Rate was 21.3 and the Death Rate 15.3 for the year.

As regards Infectious Diseases, there has again been a very low incidence during the year and no deaths took place from any of them. No cases of Diphtheria were notified and the last cases of this disease were in 1942. This disease has now almost been stamped out in this country, and in 1953 there were only 240 cases notified in the whole of England and Wales.

It will be seen from the Table showing the causes of death in the Borough that 99 out of the total of 126 deaths were from diseases which are met with in persons in the older age groups of the population. There can be no doubt that a great deal has been done to improve the health and strength of children and this has saved many lives.

Deaths from Cancer numbered 21 as compared with a total of 14 in 1952. Only one death from Tuberculosis took place. Four new cases were notified.

Housing continues to be one of the greatest problems to be dealt with. A total of 31 Council Houses and 13 private houses were completed during the year, but there are still a total of 250 applicants for new houses. It is probable that many of the older houses will have to be made habitable in the near future, as it may be some years before all applicants can be re-housed in new houses. The selection of sites for new houses frequently presents difficulties, as the sites have to be such to which a water supply can be taken and which can be supplied with a sewage disposal system. If families have to be moved from houses which are unfit it is essential that new houses are first made available for them to be moved into.

JAMES L. GREGORY,
M.B., F.R.F.P.S.G., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW

Statistics, 1953

	Total	M.	F.
LIVE BIRTHS—			
Legitimate	126	56	70
Illegitimate	2	—	2
	—	—	—
Totals ...	128	56	72
	—	—	—

Birth Rate per 1,000 of population - 21.3

STILL BIRTHS—			
Legitimate	1	1	—
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
Totals ...	1	1	—
	—	—	—

Still Birth Rate - 7.7

DEATHS	124	64	60

Death Rate - 15.3

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES: Nil.

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

	Number of Deaths	I.M. Rate
(a) Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	5	39.6
(b) Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	—	—
(c) All infants per 1,000 total live births	5	38.1

	Total	M.	F.
Deaths from Cancer	21	14	7
Deaths from Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)...	1	1	—

There were no deaths from any other Infectious Diseases during the year. The following are the rates for England and Wales during the year with regard to Births and Deaths and Infantile Mortality :

Birth Rate	15.5 per 1,000 of population
Death Rate	11.4 per 1,000 of population
Infantile mortality rate	26.8 per 1,000 live births

SECTION A

Social Conditions and Vital Statistics

Area (in acres)	1,068
Registrar-General's estimate of the population (mid-1953)	6,452
Number of inhabited houses	1,826
Rateable Value of the District	£39,074
Estimated product of 1d. Rate	£156

The estimated figure of population for mid-year 1953 is 6,452 and this is an increase of 13 over the figure for the previous year. The number of live births was 128 and this exceeded the deaths for the year by four. In 1952 there were 25 more births than deaths.

BIRTHS

There were 128 live births (males 56, females 72) and of these only two (females) were illegitimate. The Crude Birth Rate is 19.8 per 1,000 of the population, but when this is corrected by the comparability factor the rate is 21.3. The Birth Rate for England and Wales was 15.5.

INFANTILE MORTALITY

A total of five infants died under the age of one year and this gives an Infantile Mortality Rate of 38.1, which is a higher rate than in the previous year, when there were only two deaths of infants under the age of one year.

STILL BIRTHS

There was one Still Birth and this gives a rate of 7.7 per 1,000 total (Live and Still)) Births.

DEATHS

Deaths numbered 124, which number is higher than in the previous year and gives a Crude Death Rate of 19.2. When corrected by the Comparability Factor (.80) the rate is 15.3. A table showing the chief causes of death is given at the end of the report. It will be seen that out of the total deaths, which number 124, 99 were due to one of three conditions : Heart and Circulation

Chemical examinations of both supplies were found to be satisfactory and were taken in the month of August. The water from all the supplies is chlorinated before being passed to the distributing mains.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Out of 1,826 houses in the Borough, all but 40 are connected to the main sewers. No extensions to the sewers were made during the year. The houses not connected have their own drainage and arrangements for these are satisfactory.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Weekly collections are made from all premises and additional ones in the summer months from Cafes, Hotels, etc.

Some nuisances were caused at the tip by youths lighting fires.

SALVAGE

The collection of waste paper has not been recommenced. At present a total of 80 tons of baled waste paper is in stock and it is hoped to be able to dispose of this amount in the Spring of 1954, as the market for this is gradually improving.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

During the year a total of 21 private dwellings were visited and 54 visits paid to deal with rats. A further total of 79 visits was also paid to business premises numbering 20. The Inspector reports that satisfactory results were obtained.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS INSPECTIONS

Local Authorities enforce Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Factory Acts in factories where no power is employed. In factories where there is power employed the Local Authority enforces Section 7 dealing with suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences.

The District Councl have also to satisfy themselves that adequate means of escape are provided in the event of fire in factories where more than twenty persons are employed or where more than ten persons are employed above the ground floor. Certificates must be granted to the firms concerned.

The Inspector reports that there are 13 factories without power installed and 70 with power. A total of 37 inspections was made during the year and two defects were found and remedied. No written notices had to be served.

REORT ON SEWAGE EFFLUENT

A sample of Sewage Effluent was taken on the 31st August, 1953, for the Severn Water Board by one of their officers.

The Report on the sample showed that the suspended solids were 15.5 parts per 100,000 and the Biolegical Oxygen demand was 3.4 parts per 100,000. Both these figures are above the standards laid down by the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal, which were 3 parts and two parts per 100,000. The effluent is therefore unsatisfactory.

The Surveyor reports that no extensions to the main sewers were made during the year. The works required regarding the Disposal Works are being attended to and it is hoped that they will be able to give a more satisfactory effluent in the near future.

The following is a copy of a Report from an analyst on a sample of the effluent from the Sewage Works. It was taken on the 31st August, 1953, by an Officer of the Severn River Board.

Analyst's Report

	Parts per Million
Suspended Solids	155
Biochemical Oxygen Demand ... ... (5 days at 20 C.) dilution 1/30	34
Oxygen Absorbed: 4 hours—settled ...	18.3
Oxygen Absorbed: 4 hours—shaken ...	33.6
Free Ammonia as N	39.0
Nitrite as N	Present
Nitrate as N	0.72
pH	7.36
Alkalinity to Methyl Orange (as CaCO3) ...	323
Chloride as Cl	92

The effluent is unsatisfactory, the suspended solids and B.O.D. are far too high, and there is little nitrification.

(*Signed*) D. H. A. Price,
Analyst.

The Surveyor reports that new machinery for Filter Beds I and II were supplied in 1949. Machinery is now on order for Filter Bed Number 3. The filtering media in Beds 2 and 3 were cleansed in 1949 and that in Bed 1 will be cleansed in 1954.

REPORTS ON WATER SUPPLIES

The following are Reports on samples of the two Water Supplies.

Low Level Supply

	Parts per million
Total Solids in Solution	300.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	3.0
Nitrites	Nil
Chlorine in Chlorides	21.0
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 80F.	0.20
Free and Saline Ammonia	0.04
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.01
Lead, Copper, Zinc	Nil
Microscopical Examination of the Sediment	Minute Trace
Temporary Hardness	155.0
Permanent Hardness	35.0
pH Value	7.3

The above Chemical Analysis is satisfactory.
The water is a moderately hard one.

High Level Water Supply

	Parts per million
Total Solid Matter in Solution	80.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.25
Nitrites	Nil
Chlorine in Chlorides	11.0
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 80F.	1.18
Free and Saline Ammonia	0.02
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.08
Lead, Copper, Zinc	Nil
Microscopical Examination of the Sediment	Minute Trace
Temporary Hardness	25.0
Permanent Hardness	10.0
pH Value	7.4

The above Chemical Analysis is satisfactory. The Water is a very soft one. The colour is possibly due to peat.

SECTION D

Housing

Number of inhabited houses		1,827
Number of houses owned by the Council ...		375
Number of flats controlled by the Council ...		44
Houses completed in 1953 :	Council Houses ...	31
	Private Houses ...	13
Number of applications for houses		250
Improvement Grants applied for		2
Private licences granted		7

The housing problem is one of the most serious ones to be dealt with by all local authorities. Although a number of new houses are built each year the list of applicants still remains high. It is not only a question of those families who have no house of their own to live in—that is to say the younger members of the population—but it must be remembered that many houses now are more than 75 years old and do not come up to modern standards. It has been estimated that out of twelve million houses in England there are about four million which are more than 75 years old. In many of these older houses there may be no bath room and no proper food store and there may be dampness which makes the house unfit to live in. A Bill at present before Parliament contains provisions in which a Local Authority will be asked to have all houses examined and classified. Houses which are found to be most unfit will have to be dealt with first of all and the tenants re-housed if possible within five years, if this is possible. In other cases where they cannot be re-housed until a longer period has passed, it is suggested that the owners of the houses should be asked to have repairs carried out so as to make the houses fit for a few years at least. If the owners cannot do this, then the Local Authority can buy the house and carry out the repairs. This Bill has not yet been passed, but it is expected that it will be in the next few months.

Abattoirs in the summer of this year (1954) and have asked Local Authorities to make the necessary plans for their own districts. This may be done in one of the following ways :

(*a*) Councils may arrange to continue using the abattoirs used by the Ministry during the last fourteen years. This may be done by combinations of several districts.

(*b*) A Council may purchase and control a Slaughter House of their own. They may *not*, however, lease one.

(*c*) A Council may grant licences for the use of private Slaughter Houses which are reported to be fit.

Councils have also been asked to have meetings with the Farmers and Meat Traders in their districts to discuss with them the question of what is considered to be the best methods to be adopted. Licences may be given as from 1st July, 1954, for three years, i.e., to last till July, 1957.

Owing to the long time which has elapsed since many Slaughter Houses have been used, it is probable that some of them may not be considered suitable while others may be.

The whole question of what is best to do is a difficult one. The Ministry mean in due course to have large Abattoirs built throughout the country, but this may not be possible for some years yet.

The Inspector reports that the following Meat was condemned in the Borough during the year :

Beef	... ...	475lbs.	(Tubercular)
Beef	... ...	142lbs.	(Bone Taint)
Veal	... ...	122lbs.	(Dropsical)
Ham	... ...	105lbs.	(Bone Taint)

ICE CREAM

There are a total of 31 retailers of ice cream in the Borough and each of these sell one or other of five proprietary brands. Samples of each brand was taken and they were all satisfactory (Grade I).

MILK

Two dairy farmers retail ungraded milk in the town. Two samples of each of these milks were taken and both of them were satisfactory. There are three retailers of Tuberculin Tested Milk and one retailer of T.T. Pasteurised Milk. There is not yet a dairy with a pasteurising plant in the town.

SECTION F

Prevention of and Control Over Infectious Disease

The following cases of infectious diseases were notified during the year . It will be seen that, as in the previous year, there have been no serious outbreaks of any infectious diseases in the Borough with the exception of Measles among the children.

NOTIFICATIONS, 1953

Disease	Number notified	Admitted to hospital	Number of deaths
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	1	Nil
Whooping Cough ...	4	–	Nil
Measles	124	–	Nil

No cases of Diphtheria have been notified since the year 1942. The prevention of this disease among children may be looked upon as one of the greatest triumphs in preventive medicine in recent years. In 1948 the work of protecting the children was transferred to the County Health Department and children may be given protection either at the Welfare Centres or at Schools or by their own doctors at home. If required by the parents, children may also be given an inoculation against Whooping Cough.

The Ministry of Health have published figures showing that in 1944 there were 23,199 corrected notifications of the disease in England and Wales and 934 deaths from it, while in 1953 notifications numbered 240 and deaths numbered 24. It is considered that if possible at least 75 per cent of infants should be

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